



**For Immediate Release**

Easton, MD – August 10, 2022

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**Talbot County Council Meeting Highlights, Tuesday, August 9, 2022**

*These highlights only reflect the business items covered from the Council's approved agenda. To view the complete County Council meeting, please visit: Talbot County Meeting Videos - Talbot County, Maryland ([www.talbotcountymd.gov](http://www.talbotcountymd.gov)).*

Council members Callahan, Leshner, Pack, and Price were in attendance. Council member Divilio was absent.

**Introduction of Dr. Sharon Pepukayi, Superintendent, Talbot County Public Schools –**

Council welcomed Dr. Pepukayi who was appointed as Superintendent for Talbot County Public Schools effective July 1, 2022. Dr. Pepukayi grew up in Talbot County, graduated from St. Michaels High School and completed her post-secondary education at Bennett College where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education; a Master of Arts in Early and Middle Childhood Education from Ohio State University; and a Doctor of Education in Innovation and Leadership from Wilmington University. During her time in Delaware, Dr. Pepukayi worked as both a teacher and administrator. Dr. Pepukayi said during her first thirty days she has been on a listening and learning tour of the county, meeting with various individuals and organizations. She said she has especially enjoyed meeting with Talbot County Public Schools students. Councilman Pack stated, "Congratulations on your appointment and welcome back home".

**Introduction of Numbered Resolution:**

**A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE AMENDED RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE TALBOT COUNTY BOARD OF APPEALS**

Resolution No. 333 was introduced by President Callahan, Vice President Leshner, and Council members Pack and Price. The public hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, September 13, 2022, at 6:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room. Mr. Thomas noted that the Board of Appeals requested to update their rules of procedure to clarify inconsistencies. In accordance with Section 503 of the Talbot County Charter, the Council is required to approve any changes to the rules of procedure by legislative act.

### **Introduction of Legislation:**

A BILL TO AMEND CHAPTER 190 OF THE TALBOT COUNTY CODE (ZONING, SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT) TO ADD A DEFINITION OF “COUNTRY CLUB” AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE EXPANSION AND MAJOR MODIFICATION OF A NONCONFORMING COUNTRY CLUB IN THE RESOURCE CONSERVATION (RC) DISTRICT

Bill No. 1523 was introduced by Vice President Leshner, and Council members Pack and Price. The public hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, September 13, 2022, at 6:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room. Mr. Thomas noted that the legislation was initiated via a text amendment request submitted on behalf of the Talbot Country Club the purpose of which is to add a definition of “Country Club” in Chapter 190 and provide for expansion and major modification of a nonconforming country club in the RC district.

A BILL TO AMEND CHAPTER 190 OF THE TALBOT COUNTY CODE (ZONING, SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT) REGARDING SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS

Bill No. 1524 was introduced by President Callahan, Vice President Leshner, and Council members Pack and Price. The public hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, September 13, 2022, at 6:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room. Mr. Thomas noted that the Council had adopted Resolution No. 329 in April 2022 which imposed a temporary moratorium on the processing of large scale solar energy system applications to allow the Planning Commission and staff time to analyze some proposed amendments with regard to mitigation of agricultural lands for large scale solar energy systems. Bill No. 1524 includes some of those amendments. Vice President Leshner stated, “I’d like to thank the Planning Commission and staff from Planning and Zoning for their work on this matter and bringing forward the recommendations. They did quick and thorough work and this is an important matter for the County.” Council noted there may be an amendment to Bill No. 1524 which will be proposed at the August 23, 2022 meeting so the public has an opportunity to review prior to the public hearing on September 13, 2022. Council member Price stated, “We need to remember that it is really the Maryland Public Service Commission who decides where these large scale solar arrays are situated and while we hope they will consult with the County, the Public Service Commission has all of the decision making power with regards to location.”

**Presentation of Talbot County Economic Development Commission Recommendations for Funding of Talbot County Projects Through the Maryland Rural Economic Development Fund** – Cassandra Vanhooser, Director, Department of Economic Development and Tourism; Reza Jafari, Chairman, Talbot County Economic Development Commission – Ms. Vanhooser provided an overview of the \$50 million Governor Hogan included in his budget in February 2022 for economic development in Maryland’s rural counties. Each of the five regional counties received \$10 million. The Mid-Shore Regional Council, representing Caroline, Dorchester and Talbot counties, was tasked with submitting applications for up to \$10 million to the Maryland

Department of Commerce. Talbot County has \$3,233,333 available and received 23 applications. Ms. Vanhooser noted the guidelines from Maryland Department of Commerce state, “the Rural Maryland Economic Development funds are to be used for infrastructure projects that will support economic development activity, stimulate private investment and grow jobs in the state’s rural economy. Eligible uses include developing public infrastructure (such as utilities, transportation and broadband) to support attraction, retention or expansion of businesses as well as infrastructure projects related to specific industry sectors such as, but not limited to, manufacturing, clean energy, life sciences, cyber-security and agribusiness. Funding can also be used for workforce development and stimulating entrepreneurship and innovation.” A committee comprised of 10 members of the Economic Development Commission was tasked with reviewing and ranking all 23 applications and making funding recommendations to the County Council. The following 11 projects are proposed for funding:

- \$257, 500 - Chesapeake College, Future Work Workforce Training Program
- \$240,000 – Maryland Broadband Cooperative, Mid-Shore Optical Broadband Network Upgrade
- \$500,000 – Avalon Foundation, Stoltz Pavilion
- \$501,700 – Town of Easton, Port Street Improvement Project
- \$400,000 – Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center, Ag Biotech Manufacturing Project
- \$22,000 – Talbot County Free Library, Digital Literacy and Employment Skills
- \$87,133 – Building African American Minds, Workforce Development Program
- \$50,000 – Talbot County Economic Development and Tourism, Inclusive Ventures Program
- \$300,000 – Talbot County Parks and Recreation, Frederick Douglass Park on the Tuckahoe Phase II Predevelopment Engineer, Architecture, and Interpretation
- \$125,000 – Talbot County Economic Development and Tourism, Strategic Plan
- \$750,000 – Talbot County Public Works, Goldsborough Neck Road Culvert Replacement Project

The Council is tasked with reviewing the proposed recommendations and submitting a ranked list and letter of support to the Mid-Shore Regional Council by Friday, August 12, 2022. The Mid-Shore Regional Council will then review the projects and submit their recommendation to the Maryland Department of Commerce by September 2, 2022. Council discussion ensued about the process used in evaluating all of the grant applications as well as the funding recommendations. Following discussion, Council agreed to meet again on Thursday, August 11, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. to finalize their review and recommendation to the Mid-Shore Regional Council. “The Committee did their job, and while we may need to rearrange and tweak the recommendations, we thank them for their efforts” stated President Callahan.

### **County Manager’s Report:**

#### **Board and Committee Appointments:**

Historic Preservation Commission – Mr. Stamp requested the reappointment of Katherine Fones to the Historic Preservation Commission. The request was approved unanimously by the Council.

Local Emergency Planning Committee – Mr. Stamp requested the appointment of Ronald Lewis to represent Shore Regional Health and Nick Greenhawk to represent Easton Utilities. Additionally, Mr. Stamp requested the reappointment of Dana Meintzer,

Matthew Spence, Shannon Potter Dill, Sheriff Joe Gamble and Judy Bottorf. The request was approved unanimously by the Council.

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board – Mr. Stamp requested the appointment of Dr. Kristen Ann Lycett as the Town of St. Michaels' representative on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. The request was approved unanimously by the Council.

Police Accountability Board and Administrative Charging Committee– Mr. Stamp requested the appointment of the following individuals to represent the Police Accountability Board from the following areas:

Chair – Mitchell Ettinger

Easton – John Gilbert

Easton – Chris Rice

Oxford – John Pepe

St. Michaels – Mike Bibb

Sheriff Patrol Area 1 – Connie Webster

Sheriff Patrol Area 3 – JoAnn Murray

The request was approved unanimously by the Council.

Mr. Stamp requested the appointment of Constance Hope and Jennifer Williams to the Administrative Charging Committee. The request was approved unanimously by the Council.

Public Works Advisory Board – Mr. Stamp requested the reappointment of Bill Anderson to the Public Works Advisory Board. The request was approved unanimously by the Council.

- Request from Department of Public Works to Award *Bid No. 22-05, TALBOT COUNTY SANITARY DISTRICT – SEWER EXTENSION, COVEY AVENUE – TILGHMAN – TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND* – Council unanimously approved the request from the Department of Public Works to award Bid No. 22-05 to the low bidder, Retallack & Sons, Inc. in the sum of \$60,000. Following discussion at the last Council meeting, the County Engineer negotiated scope of work with Retallack & Sons, Inc. to align with available budget for project.
- Request from Department of Public Works to Award *Bid No. 22-08, REQUEST FOR LETTERS OF INTEREST, ARCHITECTURAL/ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR TALBOT COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS* – Council unanimously approved the request from the Department of Public Works to award Bid No. 22-08 to the six firms who submitted letters of interest in response to the bid to provide architectural/engineering services. This will allow the County to select a firm that is best suited for any given project.

The firms are:

- Century Engineering
- Davis, Bowen and Friedel
- Lane Engineering, LLC
- Bignell-Watkins Architects
- RAUCH, Inc.
- Wallace Montgomery
- Request from Department of Public Works to Purchase 2023 Chevrolet Silverado 3500HD Truck for Use by Talbot County Sanitary District – Council unanimously approved the request from the Department of Public Works to purchase a 2023 Chevrolet Silverado 3500 HD with utility body and towing package from Sport

Chevrolet Co., Inc. of Silver Spring, MD in the amount of \$52,890 utilizing State of Maryland Blanket Purchase Order. Truck will be used by the Talbot Sanitary District and there are sufficient funds available in the FY23 budget for the purchase.

The Council's next meeting will be held on Thursday, August 11, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. with their next legislative meeting on Tuesday, August 23, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.